

APPROVED
MINUTES
NORTHWEST PROGRESSO – FLAGLER HEIGHTS
REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
FORT LAUDERDALE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
MARCH 25, 2015 – 3:30 P.M.

Cumulative Attendance
May 2014 - April 2015

| <u>Members Present</u> | <u>Attendance</u> | <u>Present</u> | <u>Absent</u> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Steve Lucas, Chair | A | 7 | 0 |
| Ella Phillips, Vice Chair | P | 7 | 1 |
| Jessie Adderley | P | 8 | 1 |
| Sonya Burrows | P | 9 | 0 |
| Ron Centamore | P | 9 | 0 |
| Alan Gabriel | P | 7 | 2 |
| Camille Hansen | P | 6 | 0 |
| Mickey Hinton | P | 7 | 2 |
| Brice Lambrix | A | 4 | 3 |
| Dylan Lagi | P | 9 | 0 |
| Mark Mattern | P | 9 | 0 |
| Dr. Rosalind Osgood | A | 3 | 0 |
| Scott Strawbridge | P | 9 | 0 |
| John Wilkes | P | 6 | 2 |

Currently there are 14 appointed members to the Board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum.

It was noted that a quorum was present at the meeting.

Staff

Alfred Battle, Deputy Director of Sustainable Development
Sandra Doughlin, DSD/ELR
Donald Morris, Economic Reinvestment Administrator
Bob Wojcik, Planner III
Kirk Buffington, Director of Finance
Jamie Opperlee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communication to City Commission

None.

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Vice Chair Phillips called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes from February 25, 2015

Motion made by Mr. Gabriel, seconded by Ms. Burrows, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

III. Motion to Approve – North Loop – Wave Streetcar Project, Bank Loan

Mr. Battle stated that this is a request for the Board to approve Staff's recommendation that the CRA enter into an agreement with SunTrust Bank to issue debt for the North Loop portion of the Wave Streetcar project. He recalled that the Board has previously recommended that funding for this project be secured, and the City Commission has approved the issuance of debt, which resulted in an RFP to secure a lender. This proposal will be brought before the City Commission for adoption at their next meeting.

He clarified that \$1.75 million will be provided up front in order to satisfy the CRA's agreement with the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA) to add the North Loop to the Wave project. These funds were taken from the Flagler Village portion of the CRA's capital improvement program, and will be replaced once the debt has been issued.

Motion made by Mr. Mattern, seconded by Mr. Centamore, to approve.

Mr. Battle described the Wave Streetcar route and the North Loop. The CRA will pay an \$870,000 portion of the debt service each year as long as the CRA continues to exist. The loan will be self-amortizing. The principal will be paid back through assessments and revenue generated by the Wave. It was clarified that the \$870,000 would be the extent of the CRA's exposure; in the event that the CRA no longer exists, the City is written as the responsible party for funding the debt service.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed 10-1 (Mr. Strawbridge dissenting).

IV. Presentation – Ambassador Program / Chris Wren, DDA

Chadwick Blue, representing the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), provided an overview of the Ambassador Program. In 2014, he and other members of the DDA visited West Palm Beach to view that city's Ambassador Program and determine if it could be implemented in Fort Lauderdale. The DDA launched this program in October 2014 and used City grant funds to increase the program's hours and the scope of its patrol in January 2015. He emphasized the positive impact of the Ambassador Program on the Downtown area, including a close relationship with the Fort Lauderdale Police

Department, who are supportive of the program. The intent of the Ambassador Program is to address smaller issues, such as loitering, small larcenies, and graffiti.

Mr. Blue advised that the current hours of operation are Sunday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., and 9 a.m. to 12 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Teams work in two-person shifts and begin by meeting with businesses in the area. They also use maps to assist tourists and residents. In the event of major issues, the teams observe from a safe distance and contact the Police.

James Wetherington and Marcus Sigler, representing the Ambassador Security Program, described his responsibilities, pointing out that they do not act as Police Officers. Some issues they help to address include facilitating contact between homeless persons and organizations that can help them, educating tourists on safety and crime prevention, and working with the community to improve communication, build relationships, and ensure the overall quality of life. They invited the Board members to visit the Downtown area and see the Ambassador Program in action.

The members discussed the program further, including its service area, which includes the Riverwalk, 7th Avenue, and Collee Landing. Service has recently been added on Las Olas Boulevard. The Ambassadors provide a daily activity report listing everything they encountered during each shift. Service is paid for by private organizations.

Mr. Battle explained that the purpose of today's presentation is to further inform the Board about the Ambassador Program. The CRA has not yet entered into a funding agreement to expand service into Flagler Village. If they decide to do so, the DDA's existing contract with the Ambassador Program would be amended and the CRA would make a contribution to the DDA to fund a pilot program. When the current contract expires, the City would participate in the next vendor selection process. Once the program is underway, its hours and staffing would be tailored to the needs of its service area.

**V. Funding Request – T & G Group Holdings, LLC – Shoney's Restaurant
525 NW 7th Avenue**

This Item was deferred until the April 22, 2015 meeting.

VI. Funding Request – Refresh Live, Inc. – 1033 Sistrunk Boulevard

It was clarified that the funding request is for \$122,784.80 for Refresh Live, which currently operates in the Midtown Commerce Center. The funds would help expand this operation with a full build-out, including a commercial kitchen and seated restaurant, as well as chef training. A \$102,675.20 portion of the request would be a forgivable loan from the Business Property Investment Program. The additional \$20,109.60 would cover the cost of a lease on the current space.

Chad and Karen Cherry, representing Refresh Live and Bring Organics Back, confirmed that the total cost of the project would be roughly \$300,000, with the balance of the cost provided by Refresh Live, Inc. Ms. Cherry explained that the business provides organic, fresh, and local food, as well as education to help promote healthier eating and lifestyles. At present, the lack of a commercial kitchen limits the capacity of the program.

Refresh Live plans to offer meal delivery, a corporate café, contract services, and rentable kitchens in addition to its restaurant function. It is expected to create at least 20 jobs, which would not be limited to food service. Ms. Cherry noted that the presence of another business in the area also promotes neighborhood safety and a community hub. The members and guests present expressed support for the business's efforts to provide fresh local food and promote healthier options within the CRA.

There was further discussion of the funding request, which would provide \$102,675.20 from the Business Property Investment Program and \$20,109.60 for commercial rental assistance. Mr. Wojcik explained that an existing mortgage on the subject property will be forgiven in August 2015 and replaced by a smaller third mortgage. Commercial rental assistance will be provided while the building undergoes renovation. The \$102,675.20 loan will be forgiven over a 5-year period. If the business fails or moves out within this period, they will have to repay a portion of the loan.

Mr. Cherry pointed out that the business has been successful thus far without the assistance requested from the CRA or the expansion it would help fund. It was clarified that because the obligation for repayment of the loan would fall on both the business and the property owner, there should be consideration of extending the term of the lease in order to make the lease and loan periods consistent.

Motion made by Ms. Burrows, seconded by Ms. Adderley, to accept Staff recommendations, with the caveat of splitting in two the build-out and the rental reimbursement separate and the requirement or recommendation that the lease be extended to meet the [loan's time frame]. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

VII. Funding Request – Rechter Holdings, Inc. – 913 NE 4th Avenue

Mr. Wojcik explained that the subject property was purchased by Dr. Michael Rechter. Prior to his purchase, the property was occupied by a company that manufactured solar panels. The building will be completely renovated to create more attractive retail space, including an office, an art gallery, and a restaurant/bar. Minimum construction costs for the renovation are estimated at \$901,000. The Applicant has secured a loan for \$450,000, and plans to pay the remainder of the costs after the bank loan and proposed CRA contribution.

The funding request, which totals \$206,000, qualifies for three CRA programs: the Business and Property Investment Program, which would cover up to 20% of construction costs; the façade grant program for \$15,000; and streetscape improvements estimated at \$182,000, for which the CRA would cover 50% of the costs. Staff recommends approval of the request.

Dr. Michael Rechter, CEO of Integra Real Estate, advised that the company has previously focused on redeveloping shopping centers. He described some of the company's properties in other cities, including an entertainment center, a bowling alley, and a restaurant/bar. They hope to have similar success in the Progresso area with retail space. The total investment for the property is expected to total over \$1 million.

The Board discussed the request, with Mr. Centamore noting that some high-end businesses already exist in the Progresso triangle and will help promote redevelopment. He added that his neighborhood association had recently approved Integra's plans for the subject property. There was also discussion of improving mobility and providing on-street parking on Progresso Drive. Mr. Strawbridge cautioned that redevelopment of more than 50% of the property could trigger a change in the required base floor elevation.

The members also discussed access and parking, with Dr. Rechter clarifying that the space adjacent to the restaurant use is likely to be occupied by uses that do not require a great deal of parking. Mr. Wojcik confirmed that the entire site is being improved, with its build-out to be dependent upon tenant uses. Mr. Strawbridge expressed concern with the parking plans, pointing out that the ~~shared~~ parking formula used to calculate the site's requirement could contribute to commercial parking spillover into residential areas.

Motion made by Mr. Gabriel, seconded by Ms. Burrows, to recommend funding from the three separate programs: the Business and Property Investment Program ~~for~~ not to exceed \$100,000.00, forgivable loan, forgiven over a seven-year period; the second is the Façade Grant Program not to exceed \$15,000, and the third is the Streetscape Improvement Program in the amount not to exceed \$91,267.

Mr. Wilkes asserted that he had concerns with the proposal, such as the idea of funding a project that is intended to promote supportive development in the area but is not surrounded by similar businesses or uses. He also felt the parking proposed for the site was insufficient, and that the estimated costs of development may not be accurate. Mr. Wojcik advised that the estimated costs have been documented by the Applicant, who has a record of professionalism and success in development; and that the uses are supported by the community and not in conflict with the Redevelopment Plan.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed 10-1 (Mr. Wilkes dissenting).

VIII. Funding Increase – Progresso Village Neighborhood Enhancement Project

This Item was deferred until the April 22 meeting.

IX. Communication to CRA Board

None.

X. Old / New Business

Vice Chair Phillips announced that training for City Board and Committee members will be held on Monday, April 27, at 5:30 p.m. on the third floor of City Hall. Topics will include meeting protocol, public records, and the Sunshine Law. She also reminded the Board of the upcoming joint workshop with the CRA Board, which is scheduled for Tuesday, April 7, at 12:00 ~~p.m.~~ **noon** on the eighth floor of City Hall.

XI. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]